RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 13th August, 1987/22 Sravana, 1909 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock, **The Deputy Chairman** in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*241. [*The questioners (Shri Rasheed Masood and Shrimati Renuka Chowdhury) were absent, for answer,* vide *cols.* 25-27 infra.]

Construction of Border roads and feeder roads

**(*The questioners (Shri Rasheed Masood and Shrimati Renuka Chowdhury) were absent,* for answer. vide *cols.*

*242. SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be be pleased to state

(a) whether a comparative perspective plan has been drawn up by the Ministry for the construction of border roads and feeder roads;

(b) whether any estimate of the expenditure has been made to implement this perspective plan; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI K. C. PANT): (a) Yes, Madam.

(b) Yes, upto 1989-90 only.

(c) The yearwise actual/estimated expenditure for the period 1985-86 to 1989-90 is as follows:—

(Rs. in crores)

Year	Actual/Estimanted expenditure
1985-86 . . .	205 31 (Actual)
1986-87 . . .	250 10 (Actual)
1987-88 . . .	283 00
1988-89 . . .	305 00
1989-90 . . .	322 00

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: Madam, it is obvious from the answer that there is no perspective plan regarding border roads development. Since it is very crucial, I mean the border roads development is very crucial for the defence of the country, how is it that the Defence Ministry has not thought of a suitable perspective plan to develop our border roads? Secondly, is the Minister convinced that the financial outlay provided in the plan is adequate even to meet expenditure regarding border roads development in the plan itself. Hhirdiy, whether it has come to the notice of the Minister that a large number of casual workers drawn from different areas of the country, especially from Bihar have not been given adequate pay and adequate shelter at the spot of construction?

SHRI K. C. PANT: Madam, as I said in reply to (a), there is a perspective plan. I think my friend read in (b) when I said upto 1989-90 only, You read into it the meaning that there is no plan beyond that. But that is not a fact. There is, in fact, a long-term perspective plan which goes upto 2000. It is a perspective plan for the next 15 years and that takes into account the various works already in progress and also certain changes that are likely to occur and certain new works that are likely to be taken up and I find very broadly the level which will be reached in 1989-90 is sought to be maintained thereafter. Secondly, there is today a work-load which carries them in fact a little beyond the year 2000, say upto 2005 or 2006. That is the workload that is already with them. So 15 years perspective plan is there. What is a little more difficult is to assess the amount of money that will be required at that time. But very broadly I would say that one would begin at the level of Rs. 400 crores and then the escalation would be added on to that thereafter. These would be the very broad contours of the perspective plan. And about the question of casual labour, I have to look into that point because I do not take it in the context of the perspective plan.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: May I know whether the Defence Ministry has taken into consideration the infrastructure? It has already been created

by Chinese on the other side of our border. If so, whether our border organisation or border road construction in that difficult terrain is comparable in quality with the border road construction on the other side by the Chinese, and whether that has been taken into consideration while having the perspective plan.

SHRI K. C. PANT: The terrain cannot be changed and to that extent the advantage and disadvantge inherent in the terrain are there, and all of us know it. But on our side also, according to defence requirements, roads are constructed keeping in mind what kind of vehicles and what kind of weapon system they have to carry on those roads. These are the factors which are taken into account and the roads are suitable for that purpose.

SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: I lay emphasis on the construction of border roads which is very crucial in the present context. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is a plan to construct border road and feeder road alongwith the Nepal border, and Sitamarhi being the border of Nepal, is there any proposal to construct Patna-Muzaffarpur-Sitamarhi feeder road and whether it is included in this plan or not.

SHRI K. C. PANT: I am speaking subject to correction. As far as I know, concentration of Border Roads Organisation is in the North and North-East, and in the Jammu and Kashmir area Ladakh, and so on. There is something also in Rajasthan. There is something in U.P. and Himachal along the border. In Bihar, the only work which it is doing is in the Dhanbad area, because sometimes it takes up work on behalf of other agencies, and it is one of those. I think there is nothing on the Nepal border.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Because it is a very somnolent beginning to the Question Hour, we have to enliven it. Border Roads Organisation is a classic example of bureaucratic polyandry. Officially, this organisation is wedded to the hon. Minister. Access to its services is however claimed by many other Ministries and also simultaneously. Would the hon. Minister, therefore, clarify which of the various other Ministries are there claiming overlordship on B.R.O. and for what various other functions and purposes? If you wish me to elaborate, I can elaborate it. Secondly, is this the most cost-effective and systems-efficient manner in which to manage an important Defence infrastructural organisation? And thirdly, do you have a perspective plan to rectify this polyandrous situation?

SHRI K. C. PANT: The question which my hon. friend asks, in plain English is whether organisations, other than the Defence organisations, are also using the Border Roads Organisation. Yes. They are using the Border Roads Organisation. There are various agencies like the North Eastern Council and the Surface Transport Ministry and so on which make use of the capacity and skills of the Border Roads Organisation. I personally see nothing wrong in this at all. As to whether it is most efficient and most cost effective, the way in which it has worked from the systems angle, this is a matter for continuous review and study. But the Border Roads Organisation—again, I am speaking from memory—was set up in 1960. At that time, there were no organisations which could take up the roads in Arunachal Pradesh, in Ladakh and other areas and this has done excellent work over the years which is now paying us rich dividends.

SHRI JERLIE E. TARIANG: Madam, the Government is fully aware of the long border which Meghalaya has with Bangladesh. Infiltration from across the border, looting and smuggling is an every day affair. Construction of border roads was taken up long back, many years ago and even now it is remaining incomplete. I would like to know from the hon. Minister when it is expected to be completed in order to help our security forces protect our borders.

SHRI K. C. PANT: It is rather a difficult question. Roads do not protect borders by themselves. But roads are important from the strategic point of view in certain areas. In the North-East, cons-

tion of a road may be related to other important questions, not necessarily defence. Therefore, my hon. friend has asked a question to which I cannot give a categorical answer.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : महोदया, यह बिहार के जो प्रमुख रोड हैं, जो पूर्वी उत्तर सीमा से लगते हैं, उनको मिलाने वाले रोड हैं, जिनको नेशनल हाइवे कहते हैं, क्या यह जो खर्चे इसमें दिखाये गये हैं प्रतिवर्ष वार, तो प्रति वर्ष के हिसाब से 1986-87 में 45 करोड़ के, आगे 43 करोड़, फिर 22 करोड़, 17 करोड़, यह खर्चे तो बढ़ते गए हैं। लेकिन मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं के इन पांच वर्षों में जो खर्चे दिखाये गये हैं और पीछे 1962 के चाइना आक्रमण के बाद बिहार की सड़कों की स्थिति, जो बोडर को जाती है, नेपाल के बोडर को, उधर .... **(व्यवधान)**

उपसभापति : आप सवाल पूछिये।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : तो मैं यह पूछना चाहता हूं कि क्या सरकार की ओर से उन सड़कों की दशा के बारे में कोई पुनवलोकन हुआ है और उनकी दशा अगर खराब है तो उसको बनाने के लिये कोई कारगर ठोस उपाय सरकार के सामने हैं और अगर हैं तो कब तक उन सड़कों की दशा सुधर जायेगी।

श्री के० सी० पंत : यह प्रश्न तो माननीय सदस्य को बिहार सरकार से पूछना चाहिये।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : मेरा प्रश्न नेशनल हाइवे जो बोडर पर आते हैं, से है।

श्री के० सी० पंत : यह मुख्य जिम्मेदारी सड़कों की उन्हीं की है और सेंट्रल पी० डब्ल्यू० डी० की है। नेशनल हाइवे की बात उन्हीं से पूछना चाहिये। हां, बोर्डर रोड जो मैंने कहा, पहाड़ों में हैं, सीमावर्ती क्षेत्रों में है ... **(व्यवधान)** .....

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : नेशनल हाइवे फ्रीडर्स रोड का काम करते हैं न ?

श्री के० सी० पंत : हां, लेकिन जिम्मेदारियां कुछ बंटी हैं और इसका जो काम है, वह मुख्यत: सीमावर्ती क्षेत्रों में है, पहाड़ी क्षेत्रों में है और बहुत कठिन परिस्थितियों में लोग काम करते हैं और उस जगह जहां दूसरी एजेंसी नहीं हैं, वहां जाकर ये लोग काम करते हैं। इसलिये इनका काम दूसरे ढंग का है और इसमें बिहार की जो आम सड़कें हैं, उस तक नहीं पहुंचते।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह: मैंने आम सड़कों के बारे में नहीं पूछा ?

श्री के० सी० पंत : खास सड़कों के बारे में भी नहीं पूछा।

SHRI DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI: Madam, Deputy Chairman, I want to ask a specific question about the Eastern zone. Hon. Minister has given a reply to my friend Mr. Tariang, but I want to ask particularly about Arunachal State. It is a sensitive area. What steps the Government have taken in respect of the border roads in this sensitive area?

SHRI K. C. PANT: In NEFA a lot of work is being done. In Arunachal Pradesh a large number of roads have been constructed by the Border Roads Organisation and today also among the 12 major projects which are in hand one caters to Arunachal Pradesh.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Madam Deputy Chairman, under the strategic roads programme the Centre takes up the maintenance of various roads declared as such. Regular use of most of the Punjab roads by the army has a very telling effect on those roads and it is indeed very difficult for the State to regularly maintain these. I would like to know, what is the length of the roads in Punjab which have been declared as strategic roads under this programme and of which the Centre has taken up the maintenance.

SHRI K. C. PANT: It is quite irrelevant to this question.